

DOD didn't do homework on prep school

Lack of proper data led to relocation cost error

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COASTAL MONMOUTH BUREAU

The enormous cost increase to move the U.S. Military Academy Preparatory School from Fort Monmouth to its new home in West Point, N.Y., is the result of faulty Department of Defense assumptions, a spokesman said Tuesday.

The Defense Department for two years studied which military installations should be closed before recommending in 2005 to shutter the 90-year-old Army post, parceling off the prep school to the site of the U.S. Military Academy and transferring the bulk of the fort's mission to Aberdeen Proving Ground in Maryland.

The department estimated that the cost to move the prep school — which in 2005 was ap-



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proved by the federal Base Realignment and Closure commission, President Bush and Congress — was \$29 million. Recent Army budget figures show that price tag has ballooned to \$197 million, one reason the estimated cost of closing Fort Monmouth has doubled, from about \$780 million to \$1.5 billion,

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